

**STATEMENT BY  
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5 Minute Oral Statement**

**BEFORE THE**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE**

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**DEFENSE HEALTH PROGRAM  
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Chairman Frelinghuysen [FREE—LING—HI—ZEN],  
Ranking Member Visclosky [VIZ—CLOSKY], and  
distinguished members of the subcommittee, I thank you  
for this opportunity to tell the Army Medicine story.

On behalf of the dedicated Soldiers and Civilians that  
make up Army Medicine, I extend our appreciation to  
Congress for your faithful support.

I want to start by acknowledging America's sons and  
daughters who are still in harm's way – today the US Army  
has 32,000 Soldiers committed to operations in  
Afghanistan, and an additional 120,000 Soldiers forward-  
stationed or deployed in nearly 150 countries, doing the  
hard work of freedom.

Since 1775, the Army's medical personnel have served with our fighting troops, and received them when they returned home.

We do this by focusing our efforts across four priorities:

- combat casualty care,
- The readiness and health of the force,
- A ready and deployable medical force,
- And the health of families and retirees.

Just as the health of the Nation and the health of the Army are not separate entities, the Health and the Readiness of the Army are inseparable because health is a critical enabler of readiness.

Today, I am proud to report that we are beginning to see real results – in readiness, in health, and in cost savings.

Through our service lines and standardization of processes across the MEDCOM, we have synchronized our policies, programs and resources with some strong results:

- Our medical and dental readiness is at its highest level since 2001.
- Our Performance Triad program of healthy sleep, activity, and nutrition is spreading across our Army family.
- Since embedding behavioral health capabilities in the brigade footprint, Soldiers used outpatient behavioral healthcare more frequently, had fewer acute crises,

and required approximately 25,000 fewer inpatient psychiatric bed days in 2013 compared to 2012. This brought a cost-avoidance of approximately \$28 million dollars.

- The Army Wellness Centers are seeing early indicators of improved health. For the 2,400 individuals who were followed, 62 percent saw a 4 percent decrease in their Body Mass Index and a 15 percent increase in cardiovascular fitness and oxygen consumption.
- Our Patient-Centered Medical Home led to a 6 percent reduction in over-utilization of the ER, which equates to a \$16.3 million dollar cost avoidance, and a decrease in polypharmacy of almost 50 percent.

I believe this is only the beginning as we continue towards a system for health.

Army Medicine ensures the Army maintains a medically-ready Force – and a ready MEDICAL Force.

Our healthcare providers require professional **and** operational development, which begins in our military hospitals.

The Army Medicine Operating Forces provided 70% of the combat casualty care in Iraq and Afghanistan. This valuable experience permeates into our education and training at the Uniformed Services University, AMEDD Center and School, and our Medical Education and Training Center at Fort Sam Houston.

Our programs are outlined further in the written testimony, so I want to take a moment to acknowledge

what is not in my written statement – that this is a time of hard conversations, and tough choices.

For the first time, we are decreasing the size of our Army before the longest war in our Nation’s history has ended.

We are poised to transition to the inter-war years, and we must work aggressively to sustain our combat care skills, nurture an environment of dignity and respect, and maintain trust with the American people.

As a leader, I get asked “what keeps **me** up at night?”

- I worry about the long-term repercussions of **these** wars on our Veterans.
- I worry about sexual assault and sexual harassment occurring across our Nation and DoD.

- I worry about losing momentum towards building the health, resilience, and readiness of our Force.
- I worry about the loss of science and technology that has accelerated medical advances that give the American public confidence to allow their sons and daughters to serve.

Our Nation has the best military medical team in the world.

There is **no true equivalent** within the civilian training sector.

We are a combat multiplier.

We are drivers of medical innovation.



What our men and women in military medicine do every day – on deployments and in garrison – is what makes military medicine unique.

*[LOOK UP AT THE COMMITTEE]*

And it's what makes me proud.

*[PAUSE]*

This is both a time of challenge – and a time of opportunity.

The nature of war will always have medical threats. Our job is to be ready, whenever – and wherever.

Anything less.... will cost lives, and that's **NOT** going to happen on my watch.

Though we live in uncertain times, one thing is certain  
- a healthy, resilient, and ready Army will be – as it always  
has been – the strength of our Nation.

I want to thank my partners in the DoD and the VA,  
my colleagues here on the panel today, and the Congress,  
for your continued support.

The Army Medicine Team is **proudly** Serving to Heal,  
and Honored to Serve.